



Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission
January 27, 2010
Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission took place on Wednesday, January 27, 2010. The meeting was held at the Parks and Recreation, Mesquite Room, 900 S. Randolph Way, Tucson, Arizona.

1. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order with a quorum at 3:36 p.m. The following individuals were in attendance:

- **Commission Members Present:** Chairman Steve Anderson, Ward 4; Kristin Almquist, Ward 1, Elayne Feder, Ward 2; Deborah Tosline, Ward 3; (Ward 5 appointment is vacant).
- **Commission Members Excused:** Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor's Office; Bob Kovitz, Ward 6
- **Staff Members Present:** Fred Gray, Director; John Sefton, Deputy Director, Administration; Jim Conroy, East District Administrator; Susan Basford, Zoo and Reid Park Administrator; Peg Weber, Northwest District Administrator; Jane Duarte, Capital Program Manager; and Irma Adams, Recording Secretary.
- **Staff Members Absent:** Reenie Ochoa, Southwest District Administrator
- **Others in Attendance:** none

2. Approval of Minutes of January 27, 2010

Motion (Tosline/Feder) to approve the minutes of December 2, 2009. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote (4-0).

3. Call to the Audience

No one present.

4. Commission Subcommittee Reports

a. Awards Program

Peg Weber stated that award presentations were scheduled to occur at the February 9, 2010 Mayor and Council meeting.

b. Commission Strategic Services Plan (standing item)

Mr. Gray stated the item was a standing item so that if the Commission wished to discuss it.

c. Community Advocacy Group/Pima Parks Alliance

Mr. Anderson stated that regular meetings have been held with the neighborhood associations and discussion would occur at the next meeting about grants.

d. Foundation Liaison and Assistance

Chairperson Anderson stated he had not taken any action on the item.

5. Petition to Name – El Parque de San Cosme (currently unnamed)

Fred Gray stated that the proposed park is currently unnamed and is located next to the new Tucson Fire Headquarters building downtown. Along with the park, TFD also built the first segment of the El Paso-Southwestern Greenway with their funds. Mr. Gray continued by stating that the required number of signatures had been received.

Motion (Feder/Tosline) to approve the naming of the El Parque de San Cosme. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

6. Petition to Name – Rosendo S. Perez Park

Peg Weber stated the area is immediately north of Carrillo Elementary School on Main Street immediately south of La Pilita. La Pilita is leased to a non-profit organization which provides historical education and nature programming for the Carrillo school students. Ms. Weber stated that Mr. Perez was a neighborhood activist and the neighborhood association felt Mr. Perez was instrumental in keeping the properties.

Motion (Feder/Tosline) to approve the naming of the Rosendo S. Perez Park. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

7. Report on Sustainable Practices by Tucson City Golf – Brent Newcomb

Mr. Gray stated that at the last Commission meeting, Ms. Tosline reported sustainable practices being conducted on golf courses in the nation. Mr. Gray continued by stating that Brent Newcomb, Golf Course Administrator, was in attendance to report on the sustainable practices being conducted on City golf courses.

Brent Newcomb gave a brief presentation on some of Tucson City Golf's sustainable practices. All City golf courses (except Fred Enke) are on weather stations to conserve water. Staff is studying the courses to see where turf/grass may be removed. A tree trimming program was instituted and most clippings are processed through the chipper and spread throughout the courses. Mr. Newcomb continued by stating that biological, environmental friendly products are being used on the City courses including insecticides. Mr. Newcomb stated that there is a sludge developed by the City of Milwaukee that is reprocessed and made into milorganite. This sludge is very effective on the tees.

Ms. Tosline stated that the sustainable industry is constantly changing. Ms. Tosline continued by stating there are best guidelines and management practices that are reducing chemical use and are more cost effective. Ms. Tosline stated that some courses are being used as bird sanctuaries and creating habitats.

Mr. Newcomb stated that TCG has two agreements with the University of Arizona. One agreement allows the U. of A. to study the urban wildlife (raptors and coyotes) on Randolph North. The other agreement is allows the University to study the bobcats and javelinas at Fred Enke Golf Course. TCG works closely with Dr. Kopec from the University of Arizona. Dr. Kopec has helped TCG tremendously over the years move towards sustainable practices.

Ms. Tosline asked if a summary was available on Tucson City Golf's sustainable practices. Ms. Tosline suggested posting that on the website.

Jim Conroy stated that the Department had received a \$700,000 grant from the Arizona Trust Fund, in partnership with the Audubon Society, to mitigate erosion in the Atterbury Wash at Lincoln Park. The flow of the wash will be redirected to reduce erosion. Additionally, there will be about 1,000 pieces of vegetation planted in the wash. It is a known fact that certain vegetation attracts different birds in the wash. Mr. Conroy stated that once the project gets in full swing, he would request the project manager make for a presentation to the Commission.

8. Discuss Outline for the Commission's Visibility and Marketing Report

Ms. Tosline asked the Commissioners to provide feedback on the outline distributed so that the outline could be expanded. Ms. Tosline felt that the focus should be on the Bond Program and how Parks and Recreation could benefit from that. Ms. Tosline continued by suggesting the report include an introduction with facility needs and programs; current status; and new items being installed; discuss budget cuts and how they have impacted facilities and programs; discuss what the needs are as far as developing new facilities and programs or maintenance of existing facilities; and, then summarize bond funds with projected funding and associated projects.

Ms. Almquist suggested including the sustainable practices used on the golf courses.

Mr. Gray stated that the Pima County Bond Advisory Committee has met continuously during 2009 and reached a point of working towards a 2010 Bond. The Bond Committee is asking the Board of Supervisors to take the item under consideration and provide feedback to the BAC on whether or not to have a Bond Election in 2010. Mr. Gray stated that there are two trains of thought. One thought is that the needs are great and continue growing. The bids that are currently being received for projects are very reasonable which is due to the state of the economy. In that respect, now would be the best time to build. On the other hand, because the economy is bad and the assessed valuation continues to decline, the County's bonding capacity and ability to pay it back is not great. The County Administrator stated that if there is a Bond in 2010 or 2011, the first likelihood of selling bonds would be in 2013 and in \$40 million increments. The Bond Advisory Committee is leaning toward not having a Bond but there is not a substantial majority. Mr. Gray stated that marketing and visibility of the Parks and Recreation Department via the Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission is valuable with or without a Bond. A Bond election would be helpful but things are critical at this point. Mr. Gray continued by stating that citizen support and marketing of the program is more important than ever.

Ms. Almquist agreed with Mr. Gray and felt that was exactly what was discussed by the Commission last spring. Ms. Almquist continued by stating that the Ward Offices and community need to be informed of the intentions and budget changes.

Ms. Tosline stated she would add a justification under budget cuts maybe for facilities closed and/or programs reduced or cut.

Mr. Gray stated the real issue is a lack of revenue due to the sales tax decline. Additional sources of revenue are needed to augment the General Fund. The City Manager has proposed an increase in sales tax, or dedicated taxes for public safety, Transportation, and Parks and Recreation. This would provide funding for the General Fund. Mr. Gray stated that the Department's reliance on its non-profits support groups, such as Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission, Tucson Zoological, Patrons of the Adaptive Recreation Center, was of crucial importance. With the dire budget situation, it is definitely time for these organizations to express their support of the Department.

Ms. Almquist suggested adding a section for program changes and neighborhood participation to the budget cuts category.

Mr. Gray stated the Commission could work on the visibility and marketing item at their next meeting or a subcommittee could be formed to discuss the Visibility and Marketing Plan.

Ms. Tosline stated she would coordinate a subcommittee meeting to discuss the Visibility and Marketing Plan.

9. Field Lighting Inspections Report – Jane Duarte

Mr. Gray stated that as a result of the accident in Reid Park a year and a half ago, a significant testing of field lights was undertaken. Mr. Gray referred the Commissioners to the report distributed. The project involved a partnership formed by Parks and Recreation with the City's Risk Management, Procurement, City Attorney's Office, and Development Services, as well as Sellers and Sons, GLHN, and MUSCO. There were 103 mostly field lighting systems checked for amperage leakage. Sellers and Sons was the contractor that performed the work for the Department. GLHN was the electrical engineering firm that assisted in updating the design standards and also overlooked MUSCO's testing of the system. MUSCO performed the testing free of charge as the Department was part of their ongoing research and development for expanding their system. The Department had estimated that the testing would cost in excess of \$1 million. Mr. Gray continued by stating that the private sector benefitted from the research and development and the City benefitted from the cost savings. Some of the causes of the amperage leakage included: insect and rodent damage; weak splices; compromised insulation; failed equipment, original installation flaws; compromised switch gear. As a result of this testing, the newer systems have monitoring devices and MUSCO provides a 25 year warranty.

Mr. Gray continued by stating that ten field lighting systems had been de-energized pending future funding for upgrades/repairs or full replacement. These repairs total approximately \$950,000. CDBG funding is available for three of the seven full replacements. However, there is no funding available for the remaining four fields.

Jane Duarte added that Julie Parizek, Project Manager for the Department, facilitated the project from start to finish in an extraordinary manner.

Mr. Gray stated that the item is one of the Mayor and Council approved Strategic Work Plan Projects. The item is almost ready for placement on the Mayor and Council agenda for their consideration. Staff will be speaking with MUSCO to determine what opportunities might be

available regarding funding. If funding is not identified for the remaining fields, the fields will have to remain closed to the public in the evenings.

Ms. Duarte stated that MUSCO's systems are green, which not only reduces the number of required lamps but they also use less amps while in operation; therefore, they are more efficient.

10. Feedback on Changes to Golf Prices

Mike Hayes stated that although Mayor and Council approved the price increase to \$52 from \$46 at Randolph Golf Complex for residents, the full rate of \$52 would not be charged until around February 8. Mr. Hayes stated he had only received a handful of complaints. Through December, play was up 2 to 3% but revenue was down 4 to 5% due to the available discounts. Mr. Hayes continued by stating that January play was down about 22 to 23% due to the weather. The flip side to all the rain is that TCG has not had to water the courses. Mr. Hayes stated that the Pro Shops at El Rio, Fred Enke, and Silverbell Golf Courses were in the process of being available for lease within the next few weeks. This is a new revenue source for Tucson City Golf.

11. Budget Report

Mr. Gray stated that the budget report shows the Department's overall General Fund, Parks and Golf operating expenditures are at 49% for the fiscal year. Mr. Gray was unsure if the report reflected the mid year reductions taken. The Department is watching its expenditures closely. Mr. Gray briefly went over the spreadsheet, Budget/Position Summary, Fiscal Year 2005 through 2010. Eleven employees would be laid off. At this point in time, the projected deficit for next fiscal year is approximately \$20 million.

Ms. Almquist asked how the furlo days would affect the Department.

Mr. Gray stated that every City employee would receive an additional 32 hours of furlo leave which equates to a 3.5% pay reduction. Parks and Recreation will be closed four additional days between now and June 30. Theoretically, employee base pay is not reduced by the furlos so on July 1 everyone's salary will return to its "original" amount. The Department was given a target amount to meet and was informed the target could be met by a reduction in expenditures and/or an increase in revenues. Services that were cut this year include the closure of 17 pools this summer; elimination of all adult sports, except adult softball. Mr. Gray continued by stating the additional budget reductions would be emailed to the Commissioners. As the Department had been working on a Pricing Policy for several years, the policy was sent to Mayor and Council for their approval. The Mayor and Council adopted a citywide Pricing Policy at their January 5, 2010 meeting which dictates cost recovery at different levels. As a result, some fees were increased.

12. Staff Reports

a. Capital Projects Report

Jane Duarte reported on some of the highlights: construction of the Arroyo Chico Linear Park project began in December; the Pantano River Linear Park is going well; Silverlake Park parking lot is close to completion; Oury Park covered basketball court is underway. Udall Park sports field improvement bids came in under what was expected; Lincoln Park fields project will be going out to bid in early April; the Purple Heart Little League Field is under construction; the Cherry Avenue Center expansion project, which received \$1.7 million in Stimulus Funding, will be going out to bid soon. Parks and Recreation is working closely with the City of Tucson's Transportation Department on the extension of Kolb Road to connect to Sabino Canyon improvements on the

west side of Udall Park. The Zoo Africa expansion is moving to permit the project even though there is no funding available.

b. Southwest District Report

Mr. Gray stated that Reenie Ochoa was absent and asked the Commissioners to review the Southwest District report.

c. East District Report

Mr. Conroy reported on some of the district highlights. Senior Olympics Festival kicked off on Saturday, January 23 with 2,000+ participants. The Ft. Lowell Shootout occurred the weekend of January 15. The light replacement projects at Freedom Little League and Vista del Prado Little League fields will be completed by early March. These two leagues have 250+ children. Also, Udall Park field improvement project includes the building of two new soccer fields and the lighting of a third field. Since the bids received were less than estimated, the concession stand and extension to the bike path will also get built. Completion of this project is anticipated for the summer of 2010. Mr. Conroy continued by stating that the new lit, little league field at Purple Heart Park will be named after the boy who was tragically killed in Reid Park. The dedication will occur during the Little League's opening ceremonies in late March or early April.

d. Northwest District Report

Ms. Weber reported on some of the district highlights: the Friends of Marty Birdman Center, a non-profit group, have organized grant money for tennis and golf programming at the Center. The neighborhood has received money for improvements, which will include a splash pad and basketball court. Ms. Weber continued by stating that El Parque de Orlando y Diego Mendoza would be completed in mid-March. There is minimal activity occurring at the Depot Plaza, next to Hope VI MLK apartments, which includes an open space without full development in anticipation of additional retail on Fifth Avenue. The Greenway north of the Manning House which partly belongs to the City includes archaeology findings and the city will be recommending the property remain city property. The Friends of Tucson's Birthplace has been working with the Department on the Mission Gardens. The group received \$5,000 in donations to be used in building the Mission Gardens as planned.

e. Tucson City Golf Report

Mr. Hayes stated that the courses were dormant. Tucson City Golf is working with the Tucson Parks Foundation to host The Million Dollar Hole-In-One on Randolph North during the last three weekends in March. Desert Diamond is sponsoring the event. Invitations will be sent to the Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission. On March 3, 2010, Randolph North will host the final Colorado Rockies/Dan Felix Celebrity Golf Tournament.

f. Zoo and Reid Park Operations Report

Ms. Basford stated that Zoo admission fees were increased on January 19 and attendance did not seem to be affected. Ms. Basford continued by stating that the Zoo now has a restaurant. Attendance is up slightly compared to last year. Revenue is down slightly (not including the snack bar and gift shop revenue). Reid Park operations staff has been gearing up for spring training.

g. Director's Report**- Update on Colorado Rockies/Hi Corbett Field (standing item)**

Mr. Gray stated that there was nothing new with the Colorado Rockies since the last meeting. The Rockies are currently holding a Fantasy Camp with about 45 people participating. Mr. Gray continued by stating that the Department was expecting the draft of the KIDCO evaluation on February 1, 2010 and the final report at the end of February or early March. The Out of School Program Task Force will review the report prior to the Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission.

13. Mayor and Council Agenda Items**• Future, Pending, and Adopted Agenda Items**

Mr. Gray stated that Mayor and Council approved a Code amendment to reflect the fee increases. Also, the Out of School Program Task Force's sunset date was amended to the submission date of their final report to Mayor and Council.

Mr. Gray continued by stating that at the Mayor and Council meeting the labor council suggested six options for potential revenue enhancements and/or reduction in expenditures. One of the suggestions was to sell the Randolph North Golf Course. Mr. Gray stated that the City Manager had not provided direction as yet on how to proceed on that item.

Mayor and Council Agenda items since the January 27, 2010 meeting

Parks and Recreation Service Agreement	Service Agreement with the University of Arizona for the Evaluation of the City's KIDCO Program	February 23, 2010	Consent Agenda Item
--	---	-------------------	---------------------

14. Commission Future Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date

Future agenda items:

- Outline for Commission's Visibility and Marketing Report (standing item);
- Budget Strategies/Requirements-Current and Next Fiscal Year (standing item).

Mr. Gray stated that Mr. Letcher's would be presenting his framework report for FY 2011 at the February 23, 2010 meeting. If the report is received in advance, Mr. Gray stated the report would be sent to the Commissioners.

Next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 3:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Administration office, Mesquite Room, 900 S. Randolph Way.

14. Adjournment

It was the consensus of the Commission to adjourn at 5:05 p.m.